

THE PROGRESS OF NEW YORK.

BY HON. ERASTUS BROOKS.

Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly (1876-1904); Jul 1879; VIII, 1; American Periodicals
pg. 80



THE PROGRESS OF NEW YORK.—THE NEW STATE CAPITOL AT ALBANY.

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By HON. ERASTUS BROOKS.

THE opening of the State Capitol in the 102d year of the legislative history of the Commonwealth, so soon following the session which a year ago commenced the second century of its connected legislative record, demands some special notice. The age of the Old Capitol was just three-score and ten years, and some there are now living who remember the laying of the corner-stone, and who may survive its final removal. The probable age of the New need not enter into calculation; but our prayer is that the future may prove in all that is patriotic, wise, and prosperous, at least equal to the past. The New Capitol, like the Old, though not founded upon a rock, is set upon a hill, and built of granite—it is for all time. The Old has a history of events with scarcely a parallel in the history of the Republic, and the City of Albany, at one time called the colonial capital, eclipses all localities as the place where the union of the colonies was first inspired, if not consummated.

Albany was the seat of the real Union in the Congress of 1754, as New York City was the colonial

centre in the Congress of 1765. It was just here that Franklin and his compeers, and Franklin especially, sowed the seeds of liberty which gradually ripened, in 1775, in the Declaration of Independence; but away back of this, in 1691, under William and Mary, the New York Colonial Assembly asserted, in manly spirit and noble words, the rights and privileges which belonged to the subjects of the Crown in the Province of New York, and from that year on, there was an annual Assembly. These early meetings were held in New York City, and from 1777-8, some of them in Kingston and Poughkeepsie.

In the years of the past, the States have grown from

thirteen colonies to thirty-eight commonwealths. Our fathers found here, whatever their beginning, the best blood of the Indian race, of whose real origin we know so little, and the fathers came before the landing of the pilgrims at Plymouth, or of the Virginia colonists at Jamestown.

These Indians are known as the "Five Nations," and to name them is to prove their courage in battle, their eloquence in council, their wisdom in government, and this not less when they acted together in cases of emergency than when they acted as independent tribes. These tribes—the Mohawks, the Oneidas, the Onondagas, the Cayugas

and the Senecas—were the Five Nations of the English and the Iroquois of the French. They formed a confederacy which was recognized from Nova Scotia to the Mississippi, and here, where we meet to-night, then called by the Iroquois "the ancient place of treaties," and then, as now, the oldest chartered town and city in the United States, they were oftener the friends of the feeble white and red men than their enemies; and, with all their faults, I venture to say, that but for their friendship with the Dutch, New York, in their day, would have been almost an unknown land, and the independence of the people a long-postponed event.

If the love of religious liberty

was the secret of the change desired by the Pilgrims of Old England, we must remember that Holland was both the place of their debarkation and the land where they first found a welcome. The intended destination of the *Mayflower*, as she lifted her anchor at Delft-haven, South Hampton, and Old Plymouth, was the Bay of New York, but an overruling Providence directed the ship to the coast of Massachusetts. First Cape Cod was sighted and then Plymouth. So, also, the Virginia Colony—destined for North Carolina—was by a tempest driven into Chesapeake Bay.

Our present interest, however, is in New York, whose



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colonization, like that of New England and Virginia, forms an epoch in the history of the world. We justly praise the Pilgrims, who left their homes and crossed the sea for freedom to worship God. The Dutch came, if need be, to repeat the story of the Netherlands, and that story means all of independence that belongs to the republic of that name. It begins, indeed, in the terrible reign of Philip II., aiming to crush out every trace of civil and religious liberty in Old Holland. It recalls the honored names of Egmont and Horn, of Barneveldt and Grotius, of Erasmus and Maurice, and in art the marvelous skill and taste of Rembrandt and Rubens.

Eleven years and two months before the embarkation of the Pilgrims, the *Half-Moon*, Henry Hudson, commander, entered Sandy Hook, just where the *Mayflower* was directed to sail. Hudson's employers, once London merchants, but now the East India Company, sent him in search of some nearer route to Asia than by the Cape of Good Hope, and his purpose was to reach China *via* some-to-be-discovered northwest passage. He believed he could pass through the waters dividing Spitzbergen from Nova Zembla. Icebergs, then, as since, presented eternal barriers through which no ship could pass. From Newfoundland *via* Cape Cod on to the mouth of the James River, thence to Delaware Bay, thence again to the high hills of the Navesink; stopping as he came by the coast of Maine to cut a foremast from the forest, was the work of but a few days; and the *Half-Moon*, a yacht of eighty tons, which started for China, picked up at James River on the 18th of August, and passed the Highlands of New Jersey on the 3d of September.

The river which bears Hudson's name he took to be an arm of the sea, leading, it might be, to the Pacific and on to the eastern shores of Asia; but the nearer discovery of land, whose uplands divided waters flowing both into the St. Lawrence and the Mississippi—the great watershed of the cold north and the warm south; the great passage-way also in time from the lakes to the Hudson, and from the Hudson to the sea, was a discovery of vastly more importance to our own commerce, and to the trade and prosperity of the world, than all the wealth and honors which could have come from the fulfillment of his earliest and best expectations.

This is not the time nor place to compare what followed from the New York, the Jamestown and the Plymouth landings, nor the relative advantages and adventures of Captain John Smith, Sir Walter Raleigh and Henry Hudson. The bay of New York, and "the great river," as the Hudson was then called, charmed the eyes of the few beholders as they looked out for the first time, from their little vessel, as they have delighted the vision of many millions since. The great navigator, who had already traversed nearly all the known seas, and approached nearer the pole than any one born before him, as his vessel lay at anchor off the shore where is now the present town of Yonkers, wrote home, that "it was as fair a land as can be trodden by the foot of man."

But the greater beauty of the Hudson, then as now, was beyond the Highlands. Just what its charms are, we all know. The Danube has more of history, and the Rhine castles an older record, and our own great American rivers more commerce, and more vast proportions of length, breadth, and of great connecting waters inland to the wonderful West; but where in all our land or in any land, as a whole, is there a river of more real grandeur, or of such varied beauty, as the Hudson?

Contrast, too, the warm Indian welcome to the *Half-Moon* and Hudson by the River Indians, as they were called, 269 years ago, with the almost daily Indian strife

and bloodshed of the past fifty years. The little vessel seemed to come from the Great Spirit, and with its sails spread to the breeze to wing its way as from some celestial sphere.

Say what we may of those we call North American savages (and the subject is important in the light of present discussion), there remains the fact, not to be blotted out, that Hudson, a stranger to the shores, and in pursuit of gain and fame for a foreign Power, was welcomed by the natives, with rare exceptions, all along the river which bears his name, from the Island of Manhattan to the Katskills, and beyond to the capital of the State. He found here a simple and happy race of beings, living upon maize, beans and fish, smoking their copper pipes with earthen bowls—a fact proving that there lived upon this continent a race of semi-civilized people, which makes the year 1609 comparatively a period of modern time. Indeed, Verrazani, nearly a hundred years before, had rounded the headlands of the Navesink and anchored in the same bay of New York, and lay there until the storm drove him seaward, to visit, as he did, 900 leagues of coast, or from Cape Fear to Newfoundland.

The river Indians were found eager for traffic, and, at least, were as fair at a bargain as those who came from the Old World to the New in pursuit of rewards and honors and wealth.

Near the now great city of the New World, but nearer the Jersey shore than our own—though belonging to the waters of New York by its earliest charter—the Indians presented themselves in the Autumn-time, clad in gay feathers and heavy furs won from the games and sports of their own forests. The Autumn foliage, in its grandeur of crimson and gold, green and purple, in itself a mass of beauty, made a picture which needed but the blue above and the blue below to be pronounced perfect, and with the active life of the Indians bartering on the water in their light canoes, the scene was almost one of enchantment.

Wherever the *Half-Moon* moved on the Hudson, she received a hospitable welcome. Reaching the shores of the Katskills, where is now Hudson City, this welcome became an ovation. The chief, whose years and honors gave him precedence, invited the master of the seas to his wigwam, and there all the hospitalities of the now despised race—most despised where most wronged—was bestowed upon Hudson and his companions. In return, just then, they received none of that fire-water which, at the hands of heartless Indian traders and other men of greed, has since killed so many natives of the forest, and so many pale-faces of both town and country, but rather a hospitality seen in the abundance of the last year's harvest, piled up in high stacks and pyramids within a vast circular building constructed of oak-bark. The beans and maize found here were enough to fill three ships; and while the elders received their visitors with the ease and grace which belonged to their chief and race, the young men were in the forest with their bows and arrows providing game for their guests.

The feast, when prepared, made a repast which even kings might desire and their subjects crave. The corn, or succotash, was served to their guests seated on mats, and nature's fingers, no doubt, were in part a substitute for our present steel carvers and silver knives and forks. But the tokens of good-will did not end here, and as the captain re-embarked for his ship, these (so-called) savages broke their arrows into pieces, as a pledge of perpetual peace.

"Of all the lands I have seen," the navigator wrote home, "this is the best for tillage;" and he would have added, if need be, "Of all the strange people I have met, these

atives of the forest are, at least, as capable as the best of best of mankind for reciprocal hospitality and friendship." So, at least, the apostle Eliot found them in Massachusetts, Roger Williams in Rhode Island, John Smith in Virginia and William Penn in Pennsylvania.

It is worthy of remembrance, also, that twelve years after Hudson's visit to the Hudson River, a treaty of peace was made with the Indians which continued for more than fifty years, and which would have endured for a century or more, but for the interference of those vicious intermeddlers and numerous busybodies who are usually more successful in marring friendships than in maintaining peace and good-will among men.

This was true of the Five Nations of New York; and the Hollanders commenced an alliance which bade fair to continue for generations, but for the tyranny of the one bad man, Kieft, who first disturbed the common harmony, and then destroyed all hopes of peace. No Indian treaty or agreement was ever broken while the Dutch held power in the territory.

Alas! for the sad ending of the life of poor Hudson. His own people, only a year after his sail up and down the Hudson, were his murderers. On the coast of Greenland four of his own crew, all dying men, with his son, his companion also to the New World, were set adrift upon the merciless waters. While the distant North Sea became his place of burial, his best monument is the beautiful river flowing by the capital of our State. All we know of him in the end is that, with his eyes streaming with tears, he gave his last crust of bread to men so maddened by hunger that they banished their commander and best friend from their presence, and from all probable hopes of safety.

With Hudson it was as with the more renowned John and Sebastian Cabot, over one hundred years earlier, and with the brilliant Florentine, Verrazani. No man knows the sepulchre of either of these great navigators and New-World discoverers. The voyages of the Northmen, who visited New England far back in the pre-Columbian age; that of Biarne, in 986, sailing from Iceland to Greenland, and driven southward upon the American coast; of Leif, the son of Eric the Red, in the year 1000; of Karlsefne, who spent three years at Mount Hope, R. I., in 1007, and on, while matters of much speculation, are also facts of history, if we are to credit the past; but it is almost sad, after long research, to see how little we really know of the earliest men and earliest times in the discovery of America, and even of our own State. But, happily, there is much that is known and proved beyond all cavil.

The Dutch, five years after the first great navigator had left our shores, were established at Castle Island, on the Hudson, just south of Albany, where for years they were engaged in the profitable trade of furs and peltries with the Indians; and in 1628, two hundred and fifty years ago, the Dutch Reformed Church and school were planted in the City of New York.

In the meantime, the *Unrest*, Adrian Block in command, a little yacht of sixteen tons, passed up the East River, and found her way by Long Island Sound to Montauk Point, and so on to Rhode Island and Nahant.

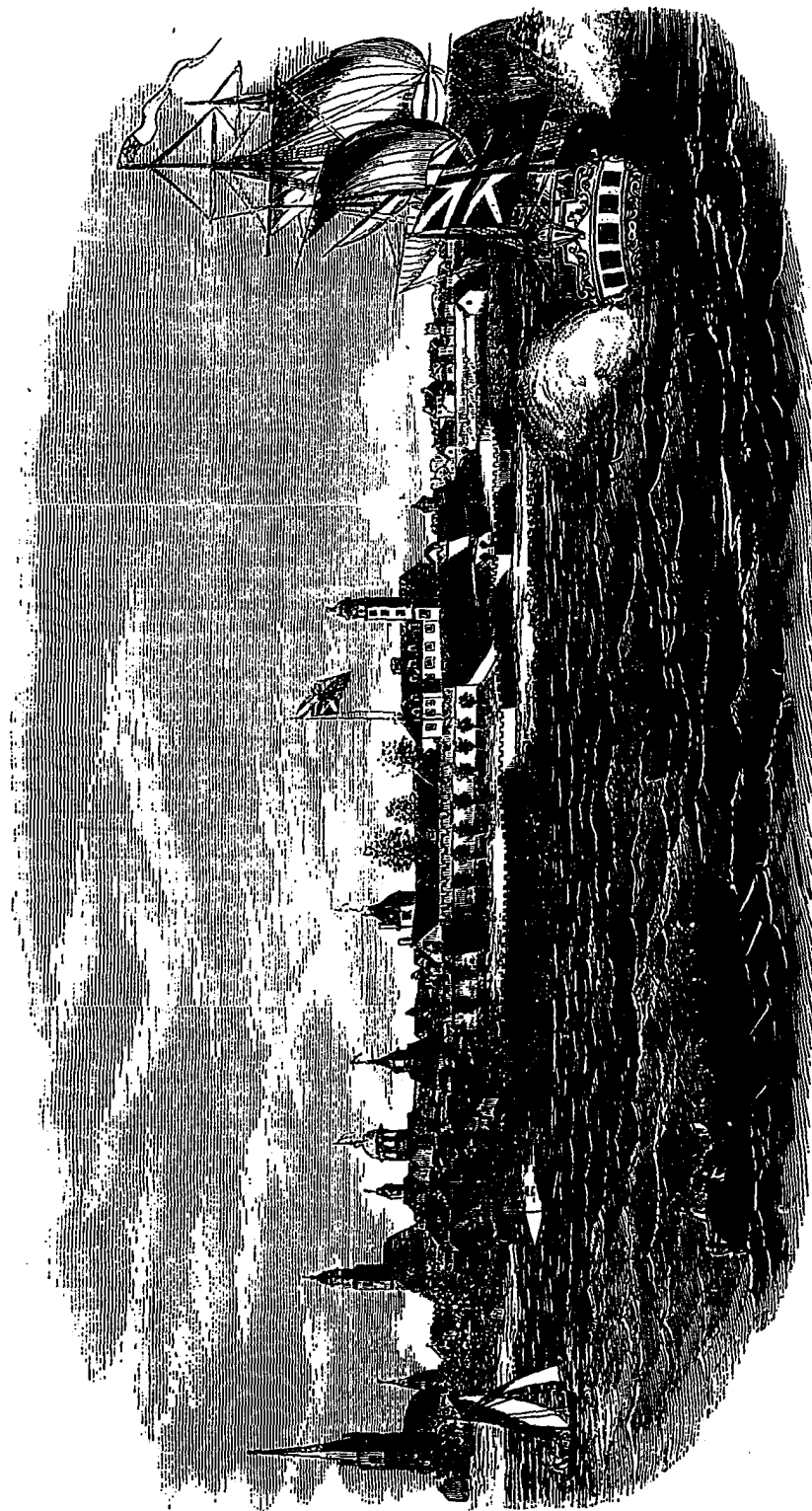
Some of the most interesting revelations in the early civil history of New York may be traced to the Thirty Years' War in Germany; the Reformation inspired by Luther; the fierce strifes between conservative and radical Protestants; the burning of Servetus, and the harsh doctrines and dogmas of John Calvin. The whole Dutch system was, indeed, then Calvinistic throughout; but in the Colony of New York it was much more. Here, from the beginning, the maxim was, as it was later in the United

Colonies: "In union there is strength." Even before the Revolution of 1688 by five years, and eight years before Massachusetts asserted the right of her citizens as free subjects of England, the New York Bill of Rights proclaimed that supreme legislative power should for ever be and reside in the Governor, Council and People in the General Assembly. Among these recited rights were trial by jury; freedom from taxation, except by their own consent; exemption from martial law, the quartering of soldiers upon citizens; and perfect toleration to all persons professing faith in Christ. Twenty years later, or in 1708, the New York General Assembly resolved, first, that every freeman in the Colony had perfect and entire property in his goods and estate; and second, that the imposing and levying of any moneys upon Her Majesty's subjects of this Colony, under any pretense or color whatsoever, without consent in General Assembly, is a grievance and a violation of the people's property.

If, in 1629, the States-General of Holland had been as wise as their English successors, they never would have granted, as in their Assembly XIX., and by State Commissioners appointed by the States-General, that exclusive charter of "privileges and exemptions" under which the feudalism of the Old World was transplanted to the New, and out of which grew the angry contests between the patroons or lords of the soil and their landed tenants, or between the owners and occupants of the ground, which for so many years created local discords and legal disputes in different parts of the State. A landed aristocracy, let me say, can never be in true harmony with a democratic government and a republican people.

These great historic events were the very stepping-stones to our earliest colonial life. There were Grotius and Barneveldt on the one side—one the great writer on International Law, the wisest, boldest and bravest thinker of his time, and an authority with statesmen and freemen everywhere and ever since. Grotius was one whom Ménage called "a monster of erudition"—and so he was but his erudition was alike read and heard in song and story, and in the profoundest learning of the schools, while Barneveldt's moral force and political influence, in a large sense, made him almost the founder of the Dutch Republic. In all history we find no man whose character commands more respect. He knew Charles V. and Philip II. as it were, by heart, and he knew them as the creators and promoters—sometimes, perhaps, for conscience's sake—of colossal crimes, and as the enemies of all true liberty. They believed; and Philip especially, not alone in the supreme empire of the Church over the State, but that Charles and Philip, by Divine right, were the real masters of the world. Spain, under them, was the realm of immense power, and it required the combined forces of France, England and the Dutch to hold her ambition in check.

Fortunately, the thirteen American Colonies, though largely Protestant, did not copy from the Dutch Republic the angry divisions among their Protestant people, for these quarrels were fiercer within the State than the wars without. The organized European league existed on the one side, and the great Protestant union on the other; but the latter possessed more enmities, if not more enemies, within its own ranks than existed among all opposing forces. It is almost incredible that the points of separation related to those sharp dogmas which from time to time seem to turn the world upside down. One of these was the doctrine of predestination, and whether, by election, one child was born to salvation, and another to damnation. In almost ludicrous contrast, some, and even a large party of the English Separatists, which met at



NEW YORK CITY IN 1782.

Amsterdam, became involved in a quarrel about the starched bands for men, and the right kind of apparel for women. Happily for the Pilgrims at Holland, all their residence there was during the twelve years of truce with Spain, after forty years of continuous war.

In some portions of this grand edifice I am reminded of the Spain of a thousand years ago; of Roman and Moorish splendor, as at Cordova; of decorations in the style of the Alhambra; of the blended Roman and Gothic, Moorish and Christian beauties of old Seville. We honor, however, only the glowing art of Andalusia, and not the follies of the old Andalusian age and people. The vaulted roof above us, sixty feet higher than the cornice, the massive corridors, decorated in blue and gold; walls tinted in olive, amber and maroon, and belted with gold and saffron; the allegories above us painted on stone—the one illustrating the "Flight by Night," followed by the coming day, and the other "The Discovery," with Fortune at the helm and Hope at the prow, pointing to the west, with Faith and Science surrounding all—are but the contributions of old-time genius to the demands of modern art.

While we copy from the past for the enjoyment of our present senses, we also stop with the eye, remembering the fate of cities and nations whose luxury and pride proved their ruin.

But to return. The

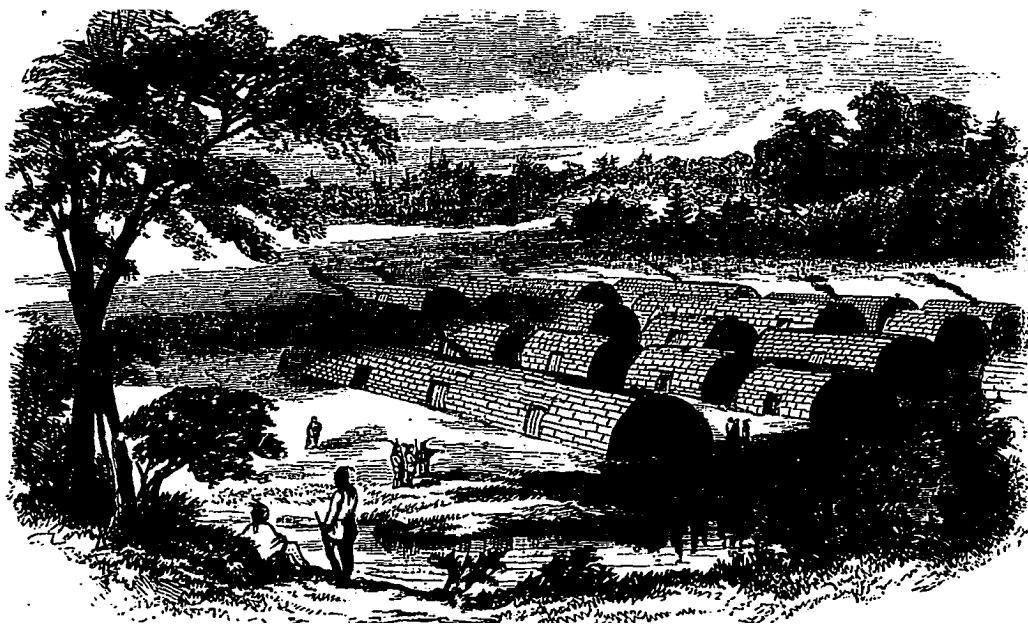


HENRY HUDSON'S FIRST INTERVIEW WITH THE NATIVES.

fault of Barneveldt—and this, perhaps, was a necessity of the times—was in asserting the supremacy of the political state over the minds and souls of men. Thankful to Almighty God should the people of the United States be for the inspiration of His word, the teachings of history, and especially of that Old-World history, which secured for us the separation of Church and State, with perfect freedom of conscience to worship God. Never in the United States of America, as so long in Holland, shall religious dissensions sever the bonds of the Republic, and never again can the dark spot of slavery, inherited in part from our Dutch ancestors, and largely from our English parents, and wholly from the Old World, but only too eagerly adopted in the New, prove the cause or effect of dissension by State separation.

I dwell upon such facts because it was amidst the throes of these European revolutions in the struggles for a freer thought that our American Colonies, and New York especially, were planted. There, amidst contending factions, Catholics, Lutherans, Baptists, Arminians, Calvinists and the innumerable throng of schismatics, the reformed religion, as was said by the author of the "Dutch Republic," found the chasm of its own grave.

Out of the Old World's strifes grew the New World's peace, embodied ninety years ago in the Federal Constitution, declaring that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." Our State Constitution is even more explicit: The preamble reads, "We, the people of the State of New York, grateful to Almighty God for our



INDIAN VILLAGE ON NEW YORK ISLAND, 1609.

freedom, and in order to secure its blessings, do establish this Constitution." Then follows the declaration that "The free exercise and enjoyment of religious profession and worship, without discrimination or preference, shall for ever be allowed in this State to all mankind."

If our first Constitutions were the latest (both Colonial and State) finally adopted, they were the best, because they gathered wisdom from all the rest. John Adams, in a letter to John Jay, did not hesitate to pronounce the last excellent over all others.

We have but to recall John of Barneveldt, executed at the Hague in 1619 for his faith and independence, and Grotius, imprisoned for life for his fidelity to truth, but happily escaping from his prison-house by the skill of his loving wife, to see what fanaticism may do, even in a Republic. Those who may think that the Hague was singularly despotic and fanatical, will remember the like fate of Algernon Sydney and Lord William Russell half a century later, and of Sir Walter Raleigh only the year before. How true it is, and often how sad it is, that in matters of state and religion, history is always repeating itself.

The Dutch Republic won her independence in spite of the most despotic power of the Old World, but only to lose it after nearly forty years of war by her own internal, and these chiefly religious, dissensions; and as if these forty years of war were not sufficient, her later destiny was again foreshadowed in the thirty years' conflict soon to follow the twelve years' truce.

Grotius, for his own country, for our country, and for all lands, most truly said, "If the trees we plant do not shade us, they will yet serve for our descendants."

It was in the midst of this internal religious war in the United Provinces that the Puritans fled from England to Holland, with Robinson and Brewster for their leaders—men who have been christened as the Paul and Timothy of religious brotherhood, as "the Æneas and Ascanius of the Pilgrim epic," and who, only just before the embarkation on the *Mayflower*, had planted the tree of that free religious government at Amsterdam and Leyden, which was soon transplanted, with entire religious freedom, into democratic government at New Plymouth and New York.

The words written at Leyden, first to Old and then to New England, accompanied the Pilgrims, and, recalling the date of their utterance, seem almost inspired. "Whereas you are to become a body politic, using among yourselves civil government, and are not furnished with any persons of special eminence above the rest to be chosen by you into officers of government, let your wisdom and godliness appear, not only in choosing such persons as do entirely love and will promote the common good, but also in yielding to them all honor and obedience in their lawful administration; not beholding in them the ordinariety of their persons, but God's ordinance for your good."

Our forefathers, almost without exception, held that political bonds between Church and State made an incestuous union; and so they departed as far as possible from that dangerous, anti-democratic, anti-republican maxim, *cujus regio, ejus religio*, or, whoever governs you binds you to his religion. This was not a question so much of sects as of dogmas, and in time dogmas have burned thousands at the stake, or tortured great multitudes in dungeons, or hung them upon the gibbet. Almost just when Hudson and the Pilgrims set out for New York Bay by order of Philip III., a million of people, the most industrious of the realm, were banished from Spain because they were Moors, and from that day to the present Spain has ceased to be a prosperous nation. The cruel exile was the work first of the Archbishop of Valencia, backed by the primate of the kingdom, the Archbishop of Toledo; but the wiser

Cardinal Richelieu, half-priest, half-soldier, and all statesmen, pronounced the act the most rash and barbarous of which the world makes mention.

It may be asked, what has prompted this interest of one not a native of this State, and in the first meeting of the Legislature in the New Capitol? I answer, and with more of State pride, I hope, than personal vanity, that it was impossible for a son of New England to have been forty-four years a citizen of this commonwealth without feeling the deepest regard in its past history and future welfare. For nearly all these years, and chiefly as a New York journalist, but with a divided official and unofficial residence at Albany, Washington, and the great metropolis, I have watched the growth of the State.

Nor could I forget the fact—which, considering subsequent events, as citizens of New York, will almost create a smile on your part—that not long after Governor Stuyvesant had surrendered all New York to the English, in that memorable year, 1688, this entire Colony, now the Empire State of the Union, was surrendered to New England, retaining only the privilege of possessing a Lieutenant-Governor. King Charles II. and his successors were, however, the real Governors of this Province up to the period of the American Revolution. No local representative government was permitted until 1683, and after three years the General Assembly was extinguished until 1691. From that time until the Revolution the Legislature made laws for the Colony, and the members increased in numbers from seventeen to thirty-one in the space of eighty-eight years, and the pay of members from 75 cents to \$1.25 a day! The counties or districts, and not the Colony, paid the bills, and the same per diem for travel, which was also limited by law. The term of legislative service from 1691 was from two to ten years, and in 1743 the limitation was for seven years, unless sooner dissolved by the King or by the Governor upon his authority. From 1683 to 1776, it is due to the past to say that New York won the first victory both for civil and religious liberty, as it did in the Congress of the Colonies for our present American Union.

Besides, the county of Richmond, from which I come, was the scene of almost greater interest through the Revolutionary period than almost any other part of the State. There was nearly the beginning of the real War of the Revolution. There, for six years, the islands Manhattan and Staten (the latter christened "the Island of the States" of Holland) were under British rule. Over both, for long periods of time, the Dutch and English alternately predominated. There were the early homes of the Walloons, the Waldenses, and Huguenots, all exiles from Old-World bigotry and oppression. King James, Queen Anne, and William and Mary, all figure in the local history of that county. Hessians and Highlanders there boasted, even after battle was over, that "they gave no quarter to rebels." There, almost contemporaneously with the meeting of the first Assembly of New York, came and anchored 267 sail of British vessels-of-war, with troops commanded by Lord Howe on the land, and the navy by his brother, the Admiral, on the sea. There 33,000 British and Hessians crossed the bay to Long Island to attack our feeble and scattered militia. There, 101 years ago on the 14th of last September, by an invitation from Lord Howe, sent through his prisoner, General Sullivan, and addressed to the Continental Congress, came Benjamin Franklin of Pennsylvania, John Adams of Massachusetts, and Edward Rutledge of South Carolina, to receive, but not to accept, offers of full pardon to "repentant rebels" who would lay down their arms and prove their allegiance.

In all the eventful incidents of the Revolution, I know of not one more impressive than that at Staten Island in

1777, where, surrounded by British grenadiers, in the room of a house still standing, then a barracks for British soldiers, Lord Howe offered a royal pardon to that triumvirate of patriots, Franklin, Adams and Rutledge, and through them to the then nearly three millions of American people, half a million of whom were slaves. Lord Howe was in manners every way a gentleman, as he was a soldier in courage; but with only pardon for men who had taken up arms for "independence now and independence for ever," there could be no reconciliation short of eternal separation from the mother country. When his lordship told the committee sent by Congress that he had a very great regard for Americans, and that their precipitancy was painful to him and perilous to themselves, Franklin answered: "The American people will endeavor to take good care of themselves, and thus relieve as much as possible the pain felt by his lordship for any service he might deem it his duty to adopt." And when Lord Howe repeated his regrets that he could not receive this committee as public characters, John Adams replied: "I should be willing to consider myself in any character agreeable to your lordship, except that of a British subject."

Later on in the war—such was the retributive justice of the times—Mr. Adams, who was made prominent enough to be singled out as one of the unpardoned and unpardonable rebels, had to be received by the King of England, in person, as the first Minister from the United States at the Court of St. James.

In later years, on Staten Island, also lived and died one who, seventy-seven years ago, was a leading member of the State Legislature, as was his father during the whole of the Revolutionary period. He was a Judge of the Supreme Court, State Chancellor, Governor of the State before the age of thirty-three; the first Governor who sat in the Old Capitol (elected in 1807, re-elected in 1810, 1813 and 1816), where sixteen other Governors have since filled the executive office; chosen Vice-President of the United States in 1817, and re-elected in 1821, after taking a soldier's and statesman's part in the war of 1812-15. As a financier, Robert Morris was scarcely more successful in the War of the Revolution than was Governor Tompkins in the second war with England. From New York City in 1801, from Richmond County in 1821, and from the latter made President of the Convention, Governor Tompkins was elected to revise and amend the State Constitution. Whatever he did, he did well, and this, whether as military commander or financier in war, or when, as in 1812, in his message to the Legislature at the commencement of the session, he asked that "the reproach of slavery be expunged from our statute book"; and in proroguing the same body, the same year—the only like executive act in the history of the State—declared that the banking system of that period had been increased and fostered by bribery and corruption which threatened irreparable evils to the community. His honest courage was met by the hottest of party anathemas; but, strong in his integrity and in a righteous public opinion, he secured the admiration of the people in all the States.

Our State abounds in many like honorable examples, which for the honored dead there is not time to mention, and still less for the living, whose fames and names will survive them. Here, of the now dead men of the past, sat also as Governors, and in more than regal state, the Clintons, Van Buren, Marcy, Wright, Seward, Lewis, Bouck and Yates; and in the halls of legislation, three candidates for President of the United States, one of whom was elected, and three of whom were chosen Vice-President. Nineteen of the citizens of New York have also filled the best places in the Cabinet at Washington.

There were also, in the past, in the halls of legislation, in Senate and Assembly, a long line of honored names, as the Livingstons, the Rootes, the Grangers, the Youngs, the Spencers, the Tallmadges, the Verplancks, the Dickenson, the Beardsleys, the Tracys, the Cornings, the Cadys, the Williamses, the Wheatons, the Taylors, the Van Vechten, the Butlers, the Bronsons, the Van Rensselaers, the Hoffmans, the Wendalls, the Ogdens, the Savages, the Oakleys, and a multitude of stars, only less in magnitude, whom no man can number, many of whom are examples for the present and for all time.

The century of our legislative history has witnessed, after the fiercest and costliest civil war on record, the growth and extirpation of slavery. The institution died out in the North by peaceful means, simply because it was unprofitable, and not alone because it was immoral. Slavery continued longest at the South because the negro was most at home in the tropics, and because, for half a century or more, it was thought—happily a mistaken thought—that cotton, sugar and tobacco could only be successfully cultivated by negro labor. Once, indeed, New York had more slaves than Virginia, and the old Holland Company agreed to furnish slaves just so long as they were profitable. On penalty of exile, no colonist could then weave an inch of cotton, woolen or linen cloth, and for any departure from this rule, to exile was added the eternal displeasure of the weavers of Holland, whose monopolies, however, let me say, were no worse than those of old England, also long enriched by the slave trade.

Just one hundred years before the close of the Revolution, Governor Dongan, directed by the Duke of York—later, James II.—and advised by William Penn, laid the foundation of a freer government in New York, where, in 1683, was legally called together the first Assembly of the people's representatives.

Passing over these nearly one hundred years, I see George Washington proposed by John Adams in the Continental Congress—John Hancock being its President—to be Commander-in-Chief of the American Army. As modest as he was brave, and as unselfish as he was wise, the office is accepted, with the desire and pledge that he may serve his country without personal reward. Ten days later he is received, in his uniform of blue, in New York City by great masses of people with an enthusiasm never surpassed. The Provincial Congress of New York shared in these honors, and bid God-speed to one whom, as with the great chief of Israel, Heaven seemed to inspire with wisdom, patience, and especial courage and endowments for command. All the way to old Cambridge was a scene of ovation and thanksgiving.

New England, with Washington in command, is soon free from British rule. Boston harbor and Boston town are no longer tenable for British troops or British ships; and Washington now moves unobstructed toward New York, from henceforth until the war closed, the stronghold of the enemy. The flag of a new Union now floated for the first time unmolested over New England, as did the British flag over the Island of Manhattan.

Boston and Philadelphia were then the largest cities. In time, Philadelphia was destined to share the fate of New York. The purpose of Sir Henry Clinton and of Guy Carleton was to cut off all communication between New England and New York; but Washington kept his eyes fixed upon the Hudson, and especially upon West Point, as the key to the North and the gateway to the South.

Soon and sadly, Long Island, New York, Fort Lee and Fort Washington were all surrendered. For forty-eight hours Washington was in the saddle, superintending the retreat of his few but brave troops from Long Island, and



THE LANSING HOUSE, THE OLDEST HOUSE IN ALBANY.

moving them all in safety, even when within gun-shot of the enemy; but later, losing his artillery and baggage in the uplands of the City of New York.

Thoughtful men have often paused to contemplate the possible fate of North America had Washington fallen during the retreat of his army from Long Island. The young nation wept at his disaster, but rejoiced that an overruling Providence preserved his life. Trenton and the Delaware alone turned the tide of battle, and Washington at Morristown, with 2,000 men, kept 25,000 at bay, and soon lifted the gloom which for a time seemed denser than Cimmerian darkness.

Later on, Burgoyne at the North, Howe at the South, an advance from New York by the Hudson, and an alliance with savage men, was the year's plan of campaign. All along our frontier the Ottawas, Wyandottes, Senecas, Delawares and Pottawatamies were in league with the scarcely less savage Hessians and Britons, led by Lord George Germain and Sir Guy Carleton.

For six months more the tide rolled like the billows of the sea against the Americans. La Corne St. Luk, the remorseless partisan, enraged by age and inspired by hate, pledged himself to Carleton that within sixty days he would bring his Indian followers to the very spot where the Legislature is now assembled.

Indians, Tories, Hessians and Canadians moved for a time toward the Hudson, like so many torrents from the mountains, but long before they reached Albany they were met by one to whose ears the roar of cannon was as natural as the music of the spheres. General Stark and his New Hampshire and Green Mountain boys stood like a wall of fire between the assault and advance of the enemy, and soon drove back the latter, both defeated and dismayed.

Ere long, King, Ministry and Parliament tire of Indian

allies and Indian massacres along the Mohawk and Hudson, at Forts Stanwix and Edward, and elsewhere. Burgoyne's surrender soon followed, with the loss of 10,000 men, thus relieving the now capital of the State, instead of placing it, in the promised sixty days, in the hands of the enemy.

As the clouds rolled over and along the Hudson, the spirits of a long-despondent people also rose in the Colonies; but all through 1777, '78, '79, there was alternate sunshine and storm, disaster and victory, until at last, with France for our ally, the mother country became weary of hostility to her own offspring, in a war that often seemed as unnatural as the mother feeding upon its young.

The story of the Wallabout and of the prison ships, of Dartmouth prison, filled with American sailors, worse than the stories of the Bastille crowded with prisoners, was a part of the cruel and bloody history of one hundred years ago. The massacre at Wyoming was only more sudden and ferocious; but, thanks again to

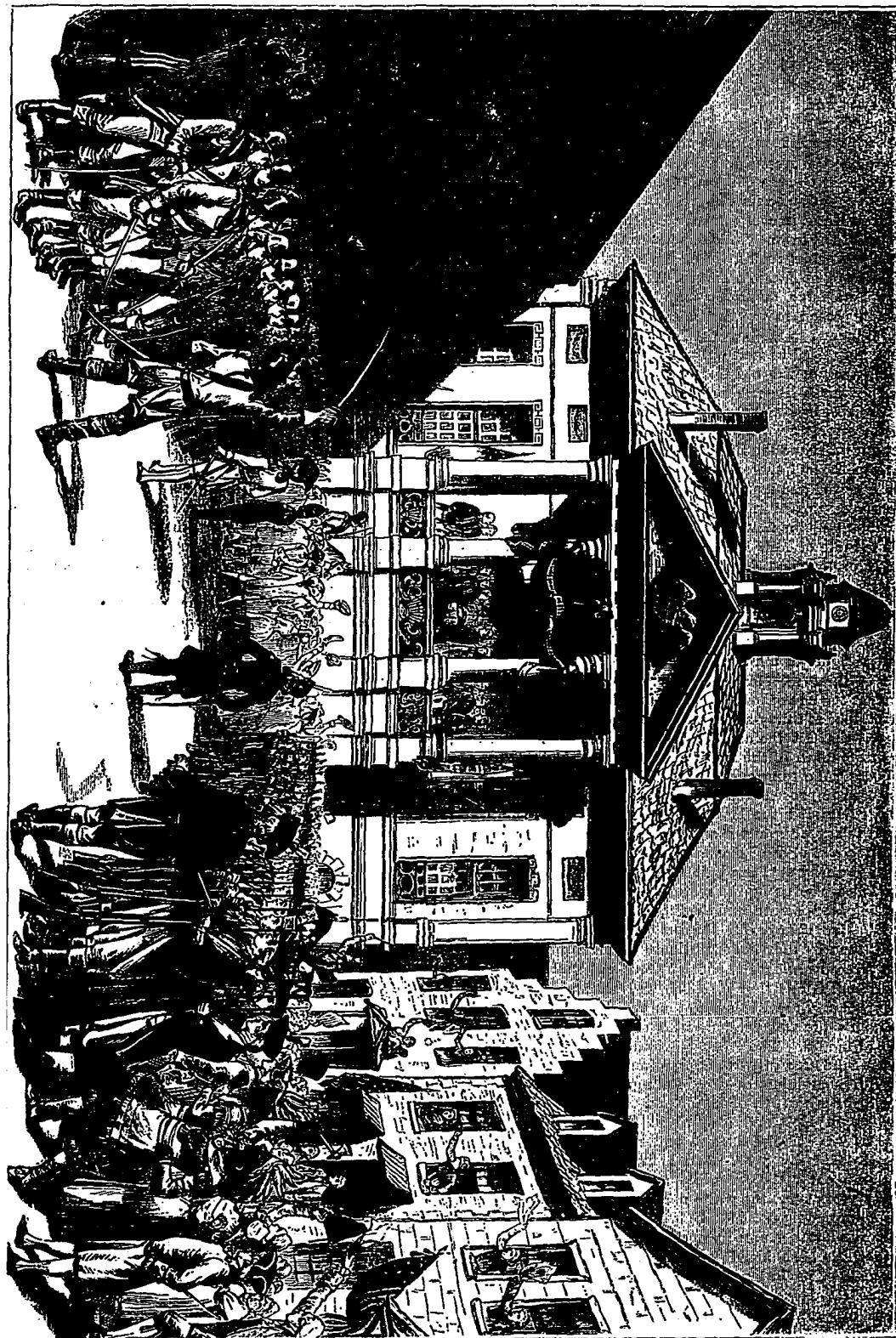
an overruling Providence, the end came, but only after Monmouth, Stony Point, Cowpens, Guilford Court-house, Yorktown and many victories upon the seas. It came in spite of Arnold's treason, the mutiny of unpaid troops, and a condition of finance so deplorable that it took thirty-three dollars of Continental money to secure one in specie. It was a maxim, even then, that bad money in the end made bad times, and always failed to pay, satisfactorily, one's debts; and it has never been otherwise, from the days of Chinese paper money to the paper notes of John Law, the Mississippi bubble, the French assignats and the currency of the rebellion.

It was just eight years from the battle of Lexington to the proclamation of peace, and nearly nine to the evacuation of New York City, ninety-five years ago, where, upon a bright and frosty November afternoon,



SIR EDMUND ANDREWS.

THE FIRST INAUGURATION OF PRESIDENT WASHINGTON, AT FEDERAL HALL, WALL STREET, NEW YORK CITY.



the last of the Britons took their leave of America, then and for ever ! They left the British flag nailed and flying at masthead upon the Battery, but before they were out of sight upon the bay it was torn to tatters, and in place of it a noble sailor, whose descendant still lives to raise the stars and stripes every 25th of November, raised the Union flag, which soon floated in the breeze, and, with God's blessing, it will float there, "not one star polluted, not one stripe erased," to the end of time !

Governor George Clinton for the Colony of New York, seven times elected its Governor in Colony and State, with General Knox, in command of all the Colonial forces, at once occupied the town. Nine days later the ever-beloved commander-in-chief took leave of the army, in the presence of his officers, at Frazer's Tavern, Whitehall, near the present New York ferry, and a few days later tendered his resignation in person to the Continental Congress, at Annapolis, and returned to his home at Mount Vernon, which he had been permitted to visit but once in seven years.

Then came the old Confederacy, which, as you know, was a failure—like the new one of 1860-61, though for a different cause—and then the Constitution, which was, and is, the grandest work in the history of nations. Under its benign influence the first Congress assembled in our great metropolis, and there, April 30th, 1789, the great charter was received and inaugurated, John Adams, the first Vice-President, presenting to take the oath of office George Washington, the first President, to Chancellor Livingston of the State of New York. That oath was a pledge to preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States. As it was obeyed by Washington and his successors, so let it be observed for all time, and not less in the spirit than in the letter.

What a Cabinet was the first one ! the President, the central figure of all, and around him only four members ; but of these secretaries were Jefferson, the senior of the four, at the age of forty-seven ; Knox, at the age of forty ; Randolph, at thirty-seven, and Hamilton not quite thirty-three—the last the ornament and pride of the State, the great organizer of the Federal Treasury, whose method of collecting, keeping and disbursing the public money has not been improved from that day to the present ; the man who so framed the law that he could not draw his own small salary without the signatures of the Comptroller and Auditor, and of the Treasurer and Register—too much red tape, you may say, but better red tape by the mile than dishonest officials by the score, or even one.

The past is secure, and the future must be judged by the past. Men change for the better rather by the grace of God, than by individual instincts or human institutions. But free government is born of God, and nations rise, advance and fall as they establish and maintain, or neglect the right way ; and men who love their homes and country watch its life and progress with an interest akin to their love of family. The truest patriotism rests only upon the solid foundation of private virtue and public purity.

With something of this feeling, I hope we have all watched the growth of New York. The population, only 340,000 in 1790, and only about 750,000 when the Old Capitol was completed ; and under the census of 1835, at the close of the year, when I first knew our great city, it numbered 2,130,000 white, and 43,000 colored persons. Forty years later, the white population was 4,642,837, and the colored only 56,127. Only in two decades, since 1790, have the latter grown in numbers, and this increase altogether has been less than one per cent., while the white population, in the same period, increased 3.22 per cent.

The cities and city suburbs of the State, always the focus of growth, have advanced as 34-93 to 1-93 of the

rural towns. Unfortunately for States and people, gravitation is ever chiefly toward the town. Of our whole population, 3,503,300 were native born ; 1,195,658 foreign born, and only 301,240 were born in the other States.

Our State growth in agriculture and mechanical occupations has fairly kept pace with our increased population. If, as in the tillage of the soil, families and dwellings, work-shops and churches, with conjugal life, are the best signs of prosperity, New York deserves to be, as she is, the Empire State of the Union. Unfortunately, in some things our growth shows both our shame and our sorrow. Just as ill weeds grow apace, so public debts often increase, bringing with their burdens more self-denial than is agreeable, and more taxes than are bearable. In our city, town, village and corporate debts, I see the source of nearly all our woes. Debt is the hardest of masters, and her servants usually the worst of slaves.

The Federal and State debts are happily on the decline, but in 1875 the local debts, if the State Comptroller is correct, make the startling sum of \$250,000,000, and the decrease is not large. Ten thousand millions is the estimated debt of the nation, and the estimated debt of the world three times as many billions. It is not an encouraging fact that in the City of New York alone, in 1878, the fifth year of the panic, there were 917 failures, and only \$18,695,531 of assets for \$63,958,403 of liabilities.

With all our present easement and brighter prospects, we must also take in the fact that in 1877, the town, county, and State tax summed up over fifty millions of dollars, with as much more imposed, directly and indirectly, upon the people by the Federal Government. The people were drawn into this crime of debt, for it was nothing less, not so much by war alone, as by a false financial policy, and by a fiction called prosperity ; but it was the prosperity of a man who thinks that delirium is happiness, and that profits from gambling are evidences of wealth. After the dinner, the wine and the debauch, comes repentance, but it comes too late.

In this and in other States, too many people, clothed in silks, broadcloths, and costly apparel, have been riding as it were upon the horns of the moon, and, as by its pale light, they beheld their lengthened shadows, they fancied indeed that the moon was really made of green cheese, and the cheese itself was both as yellow as gold, and quite as large as the orb of day. Pay-days have been coming, and coming for more than five years past, and they have not been like angels' visits, few and far between. When the debt is all paid, either by wholesale millions, as through the late Federal Bankrupt Law, or by means provided by State law, or, what is better, by the honest dollar for every honest debt, we shall once more stand upon solid ground.

But, as a contrast to this debt-picture, we have a right to contemplate our growth in political and scientific knowledge. When the first New York Assembly met, and for nearly half a century later, there were no telegraphs, no deep-sea cables putting a girdle around the earth in a wink of time, so that Valentin and Heart's Content are now twice spanned 3,700 miles over two cables in a second with the simple contents of a lady's thimble, and these contents composed only of acids, zinc, and copper. A battery of 20 cells has proved more potent than the aforesaid one of 500. Our good home-spun forefathers and foremothers had no railroads, no illuminating gas, no electric lights, no friction matches, no iron stoves, no heating by steam, or steam motive power, no side-wheel or screw ocean steamers, no sewing machines, no American pottery, no heliographs nor photographs, nor phonographs nor telephones ; no steam-plows, no balloons to survey armies as

from the clouds, nor diving bells to collect treasures from the deep, no anesthetics or chloroforms to produce deliverance from pain while limbs are being amputated, and the decayed tooth of old time removed for the brand-new porcelains of the dentist and chemist of to-day. The Indian trail path, the saddle horse, and here and there the lumbering coach, the canoe, and by sail or on foot, were the only ways and means of conveyance. And now, in sixty days one can circumnavigate the earth. The brick and Dutch ovens were the bread and meat bakers, and pine-knots and tallow dips the chief sources of light, while about the only means of warmth were the stone hearth and the deep fire-place. Carpets and rugs and mats were almost unknown. Sanded floors and the tinder-box, with its flint and iron, were the substitutes for parlor and kitchen matches. The old onken bucket and the deep-sunken wells took precedence of our Croton pipes and hydraulic rams.

All is changed now. Our State population increased 23 per cent. between 1865 and 1875; and, judging from the past, at the close of 1899, a period not far distant, the Empire State will have 6,136,000 inhabitants.

A fact also of public interest is the rather close relation of the sexes to the number of people, or, 2,378,780 females to 2,320,178 males—an excess of females of 58,602. Our foreign population is a trifle in excess of 25 per cent. of the grand total of 4,698,958, which does not include children born of foreign parents; but even these give to New York City only 57.337 of native population; to Kings County 65.24; and to Erie County 66.578. New York City has 19.198 per cent. of Irish, and 15.465 per cent. of Germans. All our sister States together have contributed only 6,411 to our whole people. The Empire State to-day has a population larger than any one of the South American States except Brazil, and more people than Holland or Denmark, Greece or Portugal, Saxony or Switzerland, and close on to the numbers in Bavaria, Belgium, or the whole of British North America, from Newfoundland to the Rocky Mountains. Of our 4,698,958 people, 1,141,462 were entitled to the ballot in 1876, after subtracting 126,060 aliens not entitled to vote, but including 394,182 naturalized citizens and 747,280 native-born citizens. Only in New York, Kings and Erie is there an excess of naturalized voters: 50,206 in New York, 5,610 in Kings, and 899 in Erie.

The charge of fraudulent voting in our two great cities, let us hope, is no longer true; for if the census be correct, New York City in 1875 had 232,152 legal voters, and polled 171,874 votes for President, or only 73.81 per cent., and Kings County but 84.43. Where 49 counties cast 90 per cent. of their legal voters, 26 of the more rural counties cast 95 per cent. Perhaps, however, it is a creditable fact to state, as a whole, that in 1876, 1,015,527 votes were polled of the 1,141,462 State voters, or 88 per cent. of the whole voting population.

The military capacity of the State is equally striking, with 956,874 males between the ages of eighteen and forty-five; and so with the schools, with (in 1877) 1,586,234 persons between the ages of five and twenty-one, which is the school period.

It is also creditable to the State that its families number 995,502, and its dwellings 728,688, or 6.45 per cent. to each dwelling, but only 4.72 to each family—a fact not so creditable to the people, and wholly in contrast to the examples of our good grandparents. The family is the only safe and sacred abiding-place of the State, and without it the sun would almost cease to shine in the heavens, and the earth prove but a living sepulchre, full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. The true family means hus-

band, wife, mother, father, children, grandchildren and grandchildren—all, indeed, who are under the same roof. These are the household gods of the commonwealth, the mainstay of its power, and the very essence of its present strength and future life. The family of States is the union of States, and this means noble ancestry and lineage, the descent from a common stock and race, kindred people in life and thought; while the human family means, and by no stretch of imagination, the welfare of our country and of mankind all over the world.

It is agreeable to say that the value of our State dwellings alone is far in excess of our national debt, or \$2,465,033,634; and nearly one-half of this value is taxed to the City of New York. Of \$50,224,848 of taxes for all purposes levied by the State in 1877, New York and Kings Counties paid \$35,653,894, and still more in 1878.

Next to the family, the glory of the commonwealth is its common schools, open to-day to 1,615,256 of our present children, not counting 7,000 students in our colleges and higher seminaries of learning, and most of all these soon to be the fathers and mothers of the State. Ninety-five years ago there was not one academy nor common school, and but one poor university, in the State. If knowledge is power, our schools, public and private, are the sources of our future greatness.

Kindred to the schools, and as the sources of Christian education, are 6,320 church edifices, with an enrolled membership of 1,146,537, and sittings for 2,537,470 people. The New York churches are valued at \$117,597,150, with salaries in gross of \$5,308,231, but making an average of less than \$840 each. In their order, Methodist, Episcopal, Baptist and Presbyterian lead the way in church buildings. In membership, also in their order, the Roman Catholics, Methodists and Presbyterians take the lead. I can find *only* forty-four sects or denominations in the State; but it is to be hoped, and indeed it is true, that many of these divisions, like kindred drops of water from one great fountain, not only mingle into one, but have their source in one great Father, their life in one great brotherhood, and their final faith and destiny in the one great Creator and Saviour of the world.

If figures were not tiresome, and sometimes exhausting, one might remember with instruction, though not with satisfaction, for the numbers are far too few, the fact that less than one-tenth of our entire people are landed proprietors. Then comes the unwelcome fact, also, that the largest proprietors are gradually but certainly absorbing the land of the smallest. In 1875 there were 241,839 farms in the State, the whole having 25,659,266 acres, the value of which was \$1,221,472,277, besides stock valued at \$146,497,154. It is to be regretted that there were 2,018 less farms of ten and twenty acres each, 14,908 less of twenty and fifty, and 2,838 of fifty and one hundred acres each in 1875 than in 1870, while the net increase of farms from 1870 to 1875 was 25,586; and this difference will be more marked in the future than in the past. Capital, machinery and competition, with a constant tendency to centralization, are always powers of absorption, but against them you may place skill, industry, order, temperance and thrift—in one word, capacity, which, in man or woman, as a rule, are elements of sure success. Land and building incumbrances were the plague-spots of so-called prosperous times, and year by year, for over five years now, the money-lenders and capitalists have demanded the promised pound of flesh, in the form of surrendered acres, workshops, stores and dwellings.

The products of our farms, providing work for 351,638 people, present almost exciting results; the sales of 1876 returned \$121,187,467, and the variety embraced

everything belonging to the soil, the dairy, and to the raising of stock.

The population representing the productive industry of the State, in 1870, was 1,537,726; of whom 1,275,372 are males, and 262,354 females. Of these, 925,293 were natives, and 612,433 foreign born; and the females were only one-sixth of the whole force. One-half of the female contingent are domestic servants. Of the rest, 81,758 were engaged in trade, and 15,140 were teachers.

Let me say here, and upon the evidence of long observation, that skilled work, in man or woman—and espe-

without His notice, neither can a kingdom rise without His aid."

We write Excelsior upon our escutcheon, placing the scales of justice in the right hand of one figure, as symbolical of purity and truth, while the cap of liberty is held in the left of the fair Goddess of Freedom, the eagle ever watching with eager eyes and free wings these emblems of our State. Ships upon the sea, steam upon land, river and ocean, and industry and thrift all around, fill up the picture and become the evidence, under Providence, that God has always blessed our homes and our State.

cially is this true of woman—is sure to find both place and reward. Alexander Hamilton once prayed for diversity in the industries of the New World; and his prayer is heard.

In the United States' roll-call of 1875 are 6,000,000 of persons engaged in agriculture, 2,700,000 in mining and manufacturing, 1,200,000 in trade and transportation, 2,600,000 in professional life, of whom 40,000 were lawyers, 62,000 physicians and 43,000 clergymen.

The conclusion of all these figures and of the brief record of history I have recited is, in the words of Franklin before the Continental Congress: "That God governs in the affairs of men, and if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground